



206 State St, Suite 9
Northampton, MA 01060
(413) 588-8423
(888) 981-8746 FAX
www.stephenjbradley.com

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION POLICY

As new technology develops there may be a need to update this policy. Clients will be notified in writing of any policy changes, and a copy of the updated electronic communications policy will be provided upon request. The most current version of this policy will be found online. It is important that as we communicate, we also protect the confidentiality that is vital to therapy.

Non-Secure Electronic Communication Overview

Email, text and other forms of electronic messages provide convenient methods of communication. Please be advised that these methods, in their typical form, are not confidential means of communication. Therefore, Stephen J. Bradley LICSW, LMHC prefers to use email communication and text messaging only with your permission, and only for administrative purposes unless we have made another arrangement. If you use these methods to communicate with me, there is a reasonable chance that a third party may be able to gain access to those messages. The types of parties that may intercept these messages include, but are not limited to:

- Those who have access to your phone, computer, or other devices that you use to read and write messages
- Your employer, if you use your work email to communicate with us
- Internet server administrators and others who monitor Internet traffic

If there are people in your life that you do not want accessing these communications, please talk with me about ways to keep your communications safe and confidential.

Let me know if you have any questions, comments, or concerns about this.

Email

Email is not a confidential form of communication. Therefore, Stephen J. Bradley LICSW, LMHC chooses not to conduct counseling by email and discourages the use

of email communication, except for administrative purposes, such as arranging or changing appointments and for forwarding links to articles, meditations, books and other resources to enhance your therapy.

There is still a possibility that your privacy may be compromised when appointment times and resources are sent electronically. Please read below for more information:

1. No form of encryption is used by the Stephen J. Bradley LICSW, LMHC for outgoing emails.
2. Stephen J. Bradley LICSW, LMHC may send appointment reminders via email. If you do not wish to receive reminders via email, please inform us of that preference.
3. Emails will generally be responded to within 2 business days (unless I am unavailable for some reason), and if a response has not been received within that time, you can text 413-588-8423 to leave me a message.
4. Please identify the topic in the subject line (i.e. appointment / schedule changes; urgent matter; resources etc).
5. Email messages are regarded as part of your counseling records and may be shared along with your record should the documents be subpoenaed by the courts, or other governing agencies.
6. You may revoke your consent for email communication at any time. You may discuss any questions or concerns with me further in your next session.

Text Messaging

Phone calls and text messages using the office number (413-588-8423) are protected under HIPPA through a Business Associate Agreement with Zoom Phone. Stephen J. Bradley LICSW, LMHC may send appointment reminders, logistical communications or resources (relevant website links etc), via text message. If you do not wish to receive text messages, please inform me of that preference. While this is an easy and convenient way to send communication, it is also not guaranteed to be secure and you may want to consider the risks to your confidentiality surrounding these communications. Below is a list of potential risks associated with the use of text messaging:

1. Communication issues can arise when communicating in text due to the lack of access to visual or voice cues, as well as the possibility of limited space, and the chance of misunderstanding when using "shorthand" words or characters to represent meaning.

2. A lost or misplaced cell phone, or a phone simply left in an insecure location, can inadvertently communicate to others that you are in counselling.
3. Text messages are intended to be used for booking, rescheduling, or cancelling appointments and for links to resources to be made accessible to you for enhancing your therapeutic process. In situations where you are sending me content related to therapy, unless it's an urgent matter, there is a possibility that I won't respond by text but will talk further in person or through email or phone when we next meet. This too is for protection of your privacy.
4. Typically, text messages will be responded to within 1-2 business days, unless I am unavailable for some reason. If you are in a crisis or dealing with an urgent clinical situation and if we have agreed to crisis / urgent care contact, you may try to send a text message requesting a phone call, but if this is not responded to in a timely manner, please call 911 or a local mobile crisis.
5. All text messages are considered part of your counseling records and as such may be subject to being shared along with your record should the documents be subpoenaed by the courts, or other governing agencies.
6. You may revoke your consent for text message communication at any time. You are also welcome to discuss any questions or concerns with me further in your next session.

Third-Party Access to Communications

When you use electronic communications methods, such as email, texting, online video, etc., there are various technicians and administrators who maintain these services, and who could conceivably have access to the content of those communications. In the case of Zoom and Zoom Phone / Texting I have a Business Associate Agreement with Zoom that is HIPPA compliant and ensures that they are legally bound by HIPPA rules and regulations regarding their access to any information related to clients or client contact.

If you use your work email to communicate electronically, your employer may access to those communications. There may be similar issues involved in school email or other email accounts associated with organizations that you are affiliated with.

Furthermore, people with access to your computer, mobile phone, or other devices may gain access to your email or text messages. It is important to contemplate the risks involved if any of these persons were to access the messages exchanged as part of your therapy.

Sharing Electronic Communication with Others

If you wish to publicly reveal information related to your therapy through electronic communication with Stephen J. Bradley LICSW, LMHC, it is requested that you consult with me before doing so. No mobile information will be shared with third parties/affiliates for marketing/promotional purposes. All other categories exclude text messaging originator opt-in data and consent; this information will not be shared with any third parties.

Between Session Contact

Between session contact with me is normally limited to short messages regarding scheduling sessions. Longer contact is possible, by arrangement, and the charge will be prorated per your session fees. Phone calls lasting longer than 15 minutes will be considered as additional counseling services and billed accordingly.

Collection and Storage of Personal Information

Storage and collection of client information is in accordance with HIPPA and in accordance with professional guidelines.

Emergencies

Stephen J. Bradley LICSW, LMHC is not an emergency service. If you are in crisis or require emergency mental health assistance please call 911, go to the emergency room of your nearest hospital, or contact a crisis line in your area.

I have read and understand this policy regarding electronic communication with Stephen J. Bradley LICSW, LMHC

Print Name:

Client Signature:

Date: _____